

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MPOL, KS, UR

SUBJECT: US-USSR CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER TALKS

1. IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE SPECULATION ON THIS SENSITIVE SUBJECT, THE DEPARTMENT IS BRIEFING REPRESENTATIVES OF KEY ALLIES ON THE STATUS OF THE US-SOVIET CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER (CAT) TALKS. KOREAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR PARK KUN WOO, ALONG WITH RICH AND BLAKEMORE, WAS BRIEFED BY THOMS OF PM ON AUGUST 18. BECAUSE OF THE SENSITIVITY OF THIS SUBJECT IN KOREA, AND THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE EMBASSY WILL HEAR ROKG REACTION TO THE BRIEFING, THE FULL TEXT IS REPRODUCED BELOW.

2. TALKING POINTS FOR CAT DEBRIEF

A. BACKGROUND

THE US AND SOVIET SIDES HAVE MET THREE TIMES TO DISCUSS CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT. IN MAY THE TWO SIDES CONFIDENTIAL

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ISSUED A JOINT COMMUNIQUE IN WHICH THEY AGREED (1) THAT THE PROBLEM OF LIMITING ARMS TRANSFERS WAS URGENT AND (2) TO HOLD REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS TO EXPLORE CONCRETE MEASURES THAT COULD BE TAKEN.

IN MAY THE UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT ADOPTED A PROGRAM OF ACTION CALLING FOR CONSULTATIONS AMONG SUP-

PLIERS AND RECIPIENTS ON LIMITING ARMS TRANSFERS. US-SOVIET BILATERAL MEETINGS REPRESENT AN ATTEMPT TO BEGIN TO IMPLEMENT THAT UN MANDATE.

EVENTS IN LATIN AMERICA, SUCH AS THE JUNE 22 DECLARATION BY THE EIGHT SIGNATORIES OF THE 1974 DECLARATION OF AYACUCHO CALLING FOR LATIN AMERICAN AGREEMENT LIMITING CONVENTIONAL ARMS, AND THE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS OF MEXICO TOWARD THE SAME END, ALSO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORK OF RESTRAINING ARMS TRANSFERS.

B. AGREEMENT ON FRAMEWORK

THIS JULY IN HELSINKI, THE US AND SOVIET UNION AGREED ON A THREE-PART FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE TALKS, CONSISTING OF POLITICAL-LEGAL CRITERIA, MILITARY-TECHNICAL CRITERIA, AND REGIONAL APPLICATION.

THE POLITICAL-LEGAL CRITERIA WOULD BE BASED ON THE UN CHARTER, UN RESOLUTIONS, AND OTHER INTERNATIONALLY AGREED DOCUMENTS. THEY SHOULD SERVE TWO PURPOSES: (1) IDENTIFYING LEGAL CONSTRAINTS ON ARMS TRANSFERS; AND (2) IDENTIFYING RELEVANT POLITICAL FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MAKING ARMS TRANSFER DECISIONS. A GOOD BASIS NOW EXISTS FOR THE ELABORATION OF MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE DURING THE NEXT ROUND, SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER.

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THE MILITARY-TECHNICAL CRITERIA SET BOUNDARIES ON THE TYPES AND AMOUNTS OF WEAPONS TO BE PROVIDED. BOTH SIDES AGREE THAT A COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT WILL REQUIRE BOTH TYPES OF CRITERIA.

BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO DISCUSS THESE CRITERIA IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC REGIONAL SITUATIONS. THIS WILL GIVE SUBSTANCE TO THE CRITERIA, WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE BE GENERAL AND ABSTRACT STATEMENTS OF INTEREST, AND IT WILL REDUCE THE CHANCES OF MISUNDERSTANDING.

BOTH SIDES AGREED IT WAS POSSIBLE TO DISCUSS ANY REGION OR SUB-REGION OF THE WORLD, PROVIDED THEY WERE NOT ARTIFICIALLY CONTRIVED.

C. INTERIM RESTRAINT

BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT, IN ADVANCE OF FINAL AGREEMENT ON CRITERIA, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REACH INTERIM RESTRAINT AGREEMENTS FOR SPECIFIC REGIONS. WHAT FORM SUCH AGREEMENTS MIGHT TAKE IS YET TO BE SEEN, AND WILL DEPEND

IN MANY CASES, ON DESIRES OF PURCHASING COUNTRIES.

D. ROLE OF OTHER SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS

BOTH SIDES RECOGNIZE THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE PARTICIPATION OF OTHER SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS IN DEVELOPING AND/OR SUPPORTING ANY RESTRAINT REGIME. THEY ARE HOPEFUL THAT SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS WILL FIND IT IN THEIR INTERESTS TO SUPPORT ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT.

WE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS OUR POSITION THAT THE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS OF RECIPIENTS MUST BE MET.

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E. ASSESSMENT AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE MOVEMENT TOWARD A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF GENERAL GUIDELINES OR CRITERIA FOR US-SOVIET RESTRAINT IN ARMS TRANSFERS.

THE SOVIETS AGAIN APPEARED TO TAKE THESE DISCUSSIONS SERIOUSLY. HOWEVER, THE NEXT ROUND -- TENTATIVELY PLANNED FOR DECEMBER TO ENABLE BOTH SIDES TO UNDERTAKE THOROUGH PREPARATIONS -- WILL PROVIDE A TEST OF THE NEAR-TERM PROSPECTS FOR RESTRAINT. END BRIEFING TEXT.

3.PARK EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE BRIEFING AND ANTICIPATED THAT THE ROKG WOULD WANT TO COMMENT OFFICIALLY AT A LATER DATE. THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ENSUED.

Q. HOW WILL THE POLITICAL CRITERIA BE DEFINED?

A. AN EXAMPLE MIGHT BE DENIAL OF ARMS TO AGGRESSOR STATES. PAK NOTED THIS COULD BE DIFFICULT, SINCE IN THE KOREAN CONTEXT KIM IL-SUNG MAINTAINS THAT THE ROKG WAS THE AGGRESSOR IN THE KOREAN WAR.

Q. WHAT KINDS OF WEAPONS TRANSFERS WOULD BE RESTRAINED?

A. ANY WEAPONS WOULD FALL UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE DISCUSSIONS, BUT THE GREATEST INTEREST IS IN ADVANCED WEAPONS SYSTEMS.

Q. WOULDN'T IT BE DIFFICULT TO APPLY THE PRINCIPLES IN KOREA?

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A. KOREA IS INDEED ONE OF THE TOUGHEST CASES. ROK SHOULD BEAR IN MIND, HOWEVER, THAT WE HAVE SAID WE WILL NOT AGREE TO AN ARRANGEMENT THAT WOULD DISADVANTAGE OUR ALLIES, AND WE WILL RETAIN OUR FREEDOM TO MEET THEIR LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS. PARK EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE PRINCIPLES AND THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR SPECIFIC APPLICATION WILL BE INTEGRATED.

Q. WOULD AN AGREEMENT JEOPARDIZE KOREAN ACQUISITION OF THE F-16?

A. THERE IS ALREADY AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO SUPPLY THIS AIRCRAFT TO KOREA, AND IN ANY EVENT THE DISCUSSIONS HAVE NOT REACHED THAT DEGREE OF SPECIFICITY.

Q. WOULD THE UNDERSTANDING INCLUDE THE TRANSFER OF DEFENSE INDUSTRIES TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS WEAPONS?

A. NO, TECHNOLOGY IS NOT INCLUDED.

4. PARK'S QUESTIONS ACCURATELY REFLECT THE CONCERN THIS SUBJECT IS LIKELY TO AROUSE WITHIN THE ROKG, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS SYSTEMS LIKE THE F-16. IN RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE THAT KOREA WAS NOT SINGLED OUT FOR THIS BRIEFING NOR HAS IT BEEN SINGLED OUT FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE SOVIETS. OUR PURPOSE RATHER IS TO KEEP OUR ALLIES IN KOREA AND ELSEWHERE INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS ON A MATTER OF CONSIDERABLE INTEREST AND IMPORTANCE.

CHRISTOPHER

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